OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY, MOTOR TRANSPORT COMMITTEE, BANGALORE.

No. M. 156—M. T. C. dated Camp Mysore, 14th November 1932.

In pursuance of their terms of reference, the Committee which was appointed under Government Order No. P. 21-29—Legis. dated 10th October 1932 to enquire into the questions relating to the Regulation and Taxation of the Motor Traffic in the Mysore State, have issued the Questionnaire of which a copy is attached.

Copies of this have been sent to leading officials and non-officials who are likely to have special knowledge of the matter.

An invitation is hereby extended to any gentlemen interested who have not received copies, to send to the Committee any replies or suggestions they have to offer with reference to the Questionnaire, as a whole or to any particular questions that are included in it.

It is requested that replies may be sent to the Secretary, Motor Transport Committee, Mysore, before the 28th November 1932.

H. RANGACHAR,
Secretary,
Motor Transport Committee.

MOTOR TRANSPORT COMMITTEE, MYSORE.

QUESTIONNAIRE.

1. Do you accept the following as an accurate account of the existing system and the difficulties which have arisen out of it? If not, will you suggest the amendments you think necessary?

The existing system is one of limited monopoly in so far as there are more applicants for permits to run services than there are services required, and the permits, which are potentially valuable property, are given only to selected persons. These persons are controlled by (*a*) limitations on selection, (*b*) limitations on times of running, (*c*) limitations on fares, (*d*) qualifications of drivers, and (*e*) specifications of vehicles.

Limitations on selection.—The provisions of the rules and orders are that the persons selected as holders of permits should be persons of substance and business capacity and capable of running moderate sized services. In practice, it appears that a great majority are persons of very little substance. For instance, in the Bangalore District, out of 155 permit-holders, no less than 105* are the owners of only one bus apiece. Some of the permit-holders are incapable of conducting the business, and the majority take no personal part in it. The actual work is delegated to drivers and cleaners, some of whom are very poorly paid, and to men known as "loaders," who harass the passengers in endeavouring to compel them to use the buses of particular owners. The main ground of selection is priority of application, and so much trouble has occurred in connection with transfers of permits that the Government have had to take the matter into their own hands.

Limitations on times of running.—The rules and orders provide that fixed timings shall be specially arranged for each service on each road, that no service shall run from any point within an hour before or after the time of departure of a train running in the same direction, and that, when new permits are given, the timings allotted to the holders shall only be such as will not interfere with those allotted to permit-holders already at work on the road. In practice, it is extremely difficult to work out a scientific time-table on this basis. The restriction with reference to railway timings cuts out a considerable part of the day, and it has been found impossible to apply it at any but the starting stations. Since the traffic is greater at some times of the day than at others, it is obvious that there must be great inequality between the permit-holders who secure the popular times and those who do not, and various arrangements have been entered into or suggested for the purpose of equalising things, as for instance, by giving different owners the popular times on alternate days. The large number of permits granted has led in places to such crowding of time-tables that there are inadequate intervals between the services run by rival companies, and many instances are given of abuses, as for instance, by buses starting at the scheduled times from the prescribed starting places, but waiting for long periods, a short distance off, to collect passengers. The arrangements for checking the times, which are conducted largely by illiterate constables, have been inadequate to prevent this, and the number of checks applied is larger than is necessary.

Limitations on fares.—Recent orders fix both maximum and minimum rates of fares per mile, but there are no orders either fixing definite rates for particular journeys or requiring the permit-holders to fix them. Consequently, the public are at the mercy of the permit-holders or their subordinates. Instances of the results of this are given in the case of a service in which the charge for a return journey is 50 per cent more than the charge for a journey out, for the reason that the passenger who has gone out has no option but to come back by the bus, which has him at its mercy. Or again the levy of what is practically blackmail from short distance passengers, whom the conductors refuse to carry except at fares out of all proportion to the distance involved or to the fares already levied from persons who have travelled longer distances.

NOTE.—These figures are for the Bangalore District only. Some of these owners may own buses in other districts.

Qualifications of drivers.—Under recent proposals, drivers will be required to be not less than 25 years of age and to have held their driving licenses for not less than three years. They will be required to produce medical certificates from District Medical Officers. Complaint is made that owing to extreme competition, the men employed are only those who will accept what is really less than an economic wage; that they are kept on duty for much longer hours than they ought to be; and that they are insufficiently acquainted with the mechanism of their vehicles and often drive recklessly and refuse to observe the normal courtesies of the road.

Specifications of vehicles.—The rules require that a vehicle should pass a brake-test once in three months, that the driver should be fenced off from his neighbours in the front seat and that he should carry a proper equipment of tools and spares. It is stated that the brakes are frequently not operative, and that drivers are not sufficiently cut off from the passengers sitting each side of them to be able to devote their whole attention to their work. Instances have been given of breakdowns when necessary spares were not available. There have also been cases in which serious accidents have been aggravated by the inability of the passengers to get out of the vehicles in times of danger.

2. It has been suggested to the committee that there are two main alternative ways of getting over the difficulties outlined above, namely, (*a*) to grant permits freely to all applicants with permission to run on any road they please, and to let matters settle themselves by a process of survival of the fittest, subject to a system of strict supervision to prevent practices that are dangerous to the public; and (*b*) to introduce a regular system of monopoly by defining groups of services in all particulars and then inviting tenders for the privilege of conducting them. Do you advocate either of these two measures? If so, which and under what restrictions?

3. Another view taken is that, while it is desirable to limit the number of permit-holders plying on the same road and to introduce the element of competition in deciding which of them is to have the privilege, it is also desirable to give a preference, so far as possible, to existing permit-holders in making the selection, and to ensure that as many of them as possible are given permits for services which will enable them to recover a return on the capital they have actually invested. Would you approve of a system on this basis? If so, how would you arrange the selection?

4. A draft form of tender notice is attached as an appendix. Will you please consider this and say what modifications, if any, you have to suggest in it?

5. If none of the three systems appeals to you, will you suggest the arrangement which you would advocate?

6. *Buses hired for special trips.*—*e.g.*, A school treat: if the right of running buses over certain roads is to be limited to particular individuals, should it include the right of running buses for special trips over the same roads? If so, should the persons licensed to run on those roads be required to run special buses at the same rate of fares as other buses? Should the right be reserved to the Deputy Commissioner to give special permits for buses belonging to other owners? Should this right be limited to the case where the persons licensed for the road have no buses readily available.

7. *Buses running from and to British India.*—If the right of running buses on particular roads is limited to particular persons, are buses running outside Mysore to stop at the frontier unless they hold permits for Mysore roads? Is it desirable for the Government to endeavour to make arrangements with the British Indian authorities in regard to the taxation of Mysore buses which are allowed to run to destinations in British India, or may the bus owners be left to make their own arrangements?

8. Very conflicting figures have been given to the committee in regard to the cost of running a motor bus. If you have any experience in this matter, will you give what you consider a fair approximation to the cost of running per mile under the following heads?—

(1) Interest on capital cost (it is presumed that the capital invested in the purchase of the vehicle will be recouped by a depreciation fund, so that the interest on capital cost will remain a constant figure throughout).
(2) Depreciation.—Please state term of life assumed and scrap value.
(3) Repairs and replacements.
(4) Petrol.
(5) Oil.
(6) Wages.
(7) Rent.
(8) Management and overhead charges.
(9) Insurance.

It is understood that the figure per mile will be arrived at by taking the total cost for a period which represents a certain mileage and dividing the figures so arrived at by the mileage which is presumed to have been run.

9. It has been represented that, with motor buses and permit-holders of the present type, a number of lives may be lost or extensive danger done to property, *e.g.*, that of another user of the road, and it may be impossible for the injured party to recover anything on account of the inability of the motor bus owner or driver to pay. Do you consider that insurance against third party risks

should be made compulsory ? What do you consider is a fair rate to pay for this ? Would it be appropriate to move the Government to undertake this insurance at a cheap rate as a function of the State Insurance Committee ?

10. The State Railways represent a very large investment of money on the part of the tax-payer and are losing money through the competition of motor buses. How far do you consider it legitimate to make the passenger take a less convenient route in order to avoid this loss to the railway ? Please illustrate your reply with reference to the following instances :—

Mysore to Krishnarajasagara,
Bangalore to Nandydroog,
Bangalore to Kolar.

11. Do you agree that buses should be allowed to compete with the railways on short lengths of road which run parallel and adjacent to the line and that no buses should be allowed to run parallel and adjacent to the line for long runs as, for instance, from Bangalore to Mysore ?

12. Would you approve of the routes parallel and adjacent to the line being reserved for services to be conducted by the Railway Department ?

13. The present arrangements as regards the taxation of passenger vehicles plying for hire other than motor buses, that is, all vehicles carrying less than 8 passengers, are that a fee of Rs. 50 is charged. It has been proposed by the Tolls Abolition Committee that these vehicles should be made subject, in lieu of tolls, to taxation based on the number of seats similar to that proposed in the case of motor buses, that is to say, at the rate of Rs. 30 a seat. Do you approve of so taxing these vehicles ? Do you anticipate any increase in their use such as will further decrease the first and second class traffic on the railways ? If the buses are still to pay a road cess in addition to the taxes in lieu of tolls, is the above taxation sufficient, in the case of other motor vehicles plying for hire which would pay nothing in place of the road cess ?

14. It has been suggested that the present system of dealing with motor transport by district authorities has led to great variations in policy, with the result, for instance, that permits are much more liberally granted in one district than in another. Or again, that far more permits are given for single buses in one district than another, the figure for Bangalore being 105 and those for Shimoga, Kolar, Mysore, Hassan and Tumkur, 42, 27, 13, 8 and 6, respectively. Permit-holders also complain that difficulties have arisen where a bus service passes from one district to another when the two local authorities pursue different policies. Do you consider that more co-ordination between the licensing authrities is necessary ? If so, how should it be applied ? Would you approve of the institution of a Road Board which would undertake the supervision of the collection of all the road revenues and the repairs and improvement of all the roads which are used for motor traffic throughout the State ? If so, of whom would you suggest that it should be composed and what staff would be required (*a*) on the traffic and (*b*) on the engineering side ?

15. It has been suggested that confusion and difficulty have resulted from the number of different levies made upon the motor transport trade. Would you advocate the substitution of a single tax for registration fee, municipal fee, permit fee, inspection fee, road cess and tolls ? If so how should it be assessed ? and in what way should the proceeds be distributed ?

16. *Lorries.*—It has been represented that heavy lorries, especially those with solid tyres, do as much damage to roads as motor buses, and further that, if they exceed a certain weight, they are liable to break down culverts and break through the crust of macadamised roads. Do you recommend that any vehicle over a certain weight say, five tons, should be prohibited from using the roads ?

17. Similarly, some roads, *e.g.*, those that are gravelled and not metalled, are broken up by any lorry traffic. Would you aprove of the prohibition of all lorry traffic in such cases ?

18. The Tolls Abolition Committee have recommended the following scale of taxation upon lorries in lieu of tolls :—

Description of the vehicle	Rate
	Rs.
Motor lorries used for transport of goods—	
Vehicles not exceeding $\frac{3}{4}$ ton in weight unladen	300 per annum
Lorries exceeding $\frac{3}{4}$ ton and not exceeding $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons	500 ,,
Lorries exceeding $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons and not exceeding $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons	800 ,,
Lorries exceeding $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons and not exceeding $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons	900 ,,
Lorries exceeding $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons and not exceeding 5 tons	1,000 ,,
Lorries exceeding 5 tons in weight	1,100 ,,

Do you consider this scale adequate, or would you still further increase the charge on the heaviest grades of lorries ?

19. It has been recommended that, pending disposal of the above recommendation, the toll on a lorry should be raised to Rs. 3. Would you approve of this (*a*) generally or (*b*) for lorries of more than one and a half tons' capacity ?

20. Lorries plying for hire are made to pay consolidated fees of Rs. 100 and Rs. 200 according as their carrying capacities are one ton or under, or more than one ton, respectively, in lieu of the road cess. (One and a half times these rates are leviable on railway competition roads.) A large number of cases have been detected in which lorries that had not paid this fee were plying for hire. Do you consider it (*a*) necessary and (*b*) practicable to distinguish between lorries plying for hire and lorries retained for private use ? If so, do you consider the additional taxation imposed upon them adequate or would you graduate it with reference to their capacity ?

21. It has been represented that lorries compete with the bus traffic by carrying passengers and that, in some cases, the lives of persons so carried have been endangered. Would you approve of a regulation prohibiting more than three persons, including the driver and cleaner, from being carried in any lorry ?

22. The Railway Goods Tariff is roughly an *ad valorem* tariff, so that consignors of goods are under temptation to send those in respect of which the higher rates are fixed by lorry, while reserving those which only pay low rates of freight for the railway. Do you consider that it would be legitimate, in order to avoid this, to prohibit lorries running on roads parallel and adjacent to State Railway lines ?

DRAFT TENDER NOTICE.

Tenders are invited for the monopoly privilege of running the motor bus services indicated in the schedule attached for a term of three or five years with effect from 1st July 1933.

2. Tenders may be submitted for any service or group of services in accordance with the convenience of the tenderer. The Government do not undertake to accept the highest or any tender in any case, or to adopt the grouping suggested by tenderers as that which would suit their convenience.

3. Tenders will be in terms of the rate of road cess per mile which the tenderer is prepared to pay for the service. Normally a separate rate must be quoted for each service, but there is no objection to a tenderer quoting a higher rate for a group of services than he would be prepared to pay for a single service out of the group. No tender for less than 6 pies per mile will be considered.

4. A deposit of Rs. 25 will be made with the tender for each service for which a tender is made, whether it forms part of a group or otherwise.

5. The successful tenderer will be required to adhere rigidly to the timetable and fare-table prescribed for the service for which he is licensed and to accept and adhere to any additions or modifications in the same which may be approved, from time to time, by the prescribed authority.

6. The successful tenderer will be required to maintain such number of vehicles for the running of the service and such reserve as is required by the prescribed authority.

7. He will also be required to provide such number of additional vehicles as may be necessary from time to time to deal with the traffic arising, and in the case of extensive seasonal traffic, as on the occasions of Jatras, to make arrangements for bringing into working a sufficient supplementary service for carrying all the traffic offering.

8. The vehicles used by the tenderer shall be inspected and certified as in satisfactory condition by such official as may be prescribed.

9. They shall be so constructed that the driver shall either be placed in a separate seat in front of the passengers or separated from the passengers by partitions.

10. There must be no bars or other obstructions preventing easy exit for passengers at the sides.

11. The owner of every vehicle shall get it examined once in every six months by a person approved by the District Magistrate as to its structural strength, condition and running order generally, and his certificate as to it's fitness for use on the road shall be submitted by the owner to the District Magistrate. No vehicle shall be let or ply for hire for a period exceeding six months without its being examined and certified in the manner specified above.

12. In the case of a motor vehicle plying for hire on a ghat road, the owner shall get it examined once in three months by a person approved by the District Magistrate. The provisions of the above condition shall otherwise apply *mutatis mutandis* to such vehicles.

13. Every vehicle employed by the tenderer shall at all times be open to inspection by (i) any Magistrate of or above the second class, (ii) any police officer not below the rank of Inspector of Police or (iii) an Inspector of Motor Vehicles. If any such officer considers any vehicle to be unfit

for use on the road, he shall record his reasons in writing and shall communicate them to the owner as well as to the District Magistrate. The vehicle shall not then be let or ply for hire without the special permission of the District Magistrate until a certificate as to its fitness has been produced from a person approved by the prescribed authority.

Note.—The inspection under condition 13 is supplemental to, but distinct from, the examination under conditions 11 and 12, the object of such inspection being to verify, whenever and as often as may be necessary, the general fitness of the motor vehicles for use on public roads.

14. Every vehicle of the tenderer must carry at least two spare tyres and tubes and a full kit of tools.

15. Every vehicle must be insured against third party risks, and the permit for any vehicle will automatically expire if the policy is allowed to lapse.

16. Every vehicle must be in charge of a licensed driver and a conductor, who may also be a cleaner. The driver must be certified as physically fit by a District Medical Officer once a year.

17. He must possess a certificate that he is technically qualified by such authority as may be prescribed.

18. He must be over 25 years of age and must have held a driving license for not less than three years.

19. Except in the case of accident, he must never be on duty with his vehicle more than eight hours in the twenty-four.

20. The successful tenderer will be required to make a security deposit of Rs. 250 for each service for which he receives a permit. In the event of any breach of the conditions of his permit, he will be lible to a cancellation of the same, or to the suspension of all or any of his services, or to a fine not exceeding Rs. 50 for each offence, which may be deducted out of his security deposit. All sums so deducted must be replaced by him within one week of the deduction being notified to him.